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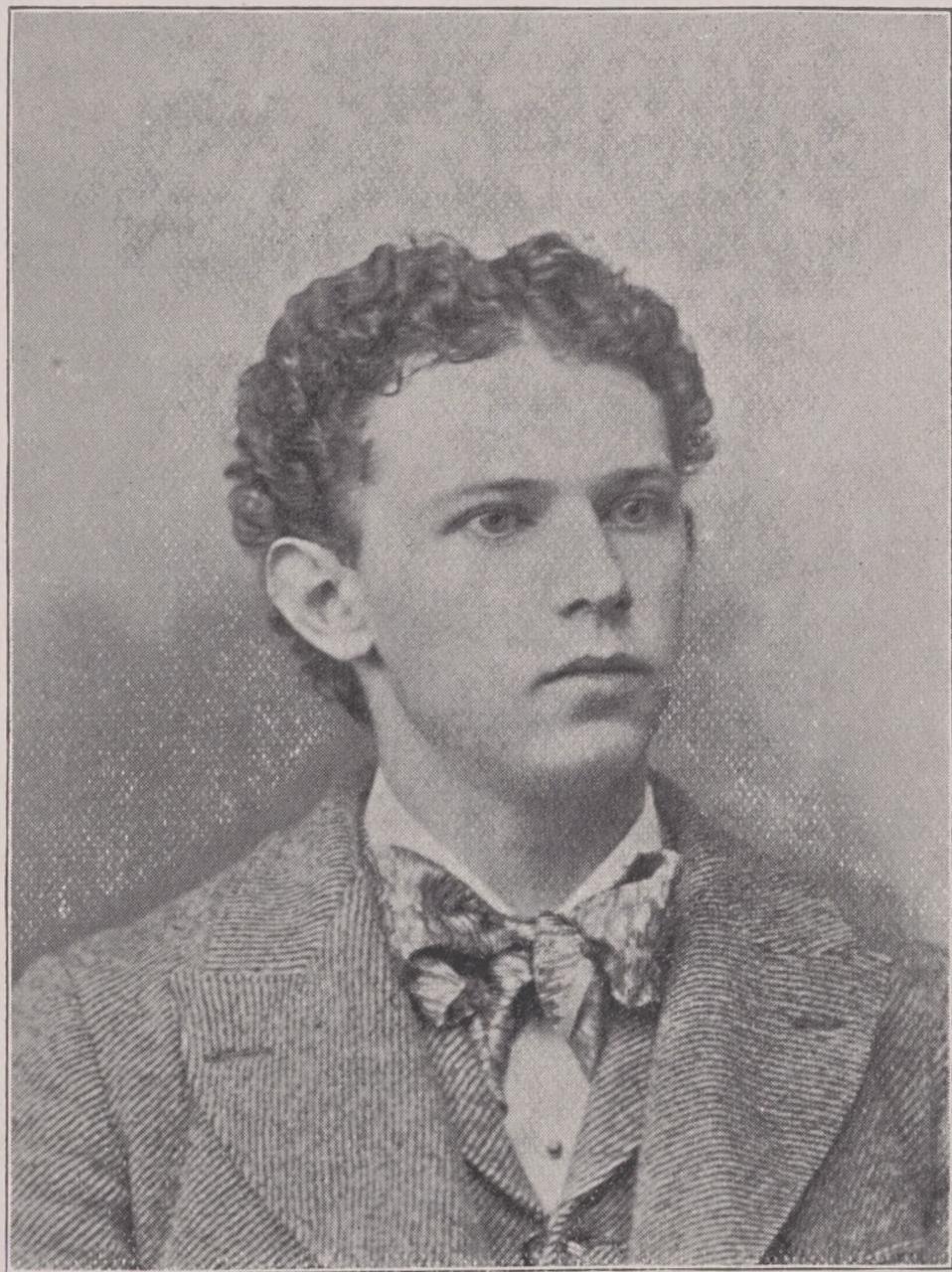
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In the Next Generation And Other Stories.

Clarence Crane.



Clarence Crane -

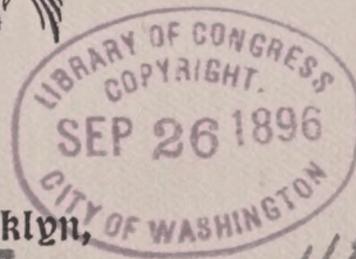
In the Flirt Generation

▀ And Other Stories. ▀

— BY —

Clarence Crane. *au*

(FIRST EDITION.)



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Brooklyn,
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TO
MALCOLM SPRINGER.

¶HERE is a certain wayside-inn situated among the hills in the North Country that has always appealed to me as being an ideal caravansary. Great oaks stretch their protecting arms over its gable roof and many familiar shrubs and creepers have obsessed the interstices and sides to such a degree that it has every appearance of a veritable hanging nest of gigantic proportions.

I trust that it will be our fortune during the various pilgrimages of life, to meet in like homely quarters, where our horses will be well cared for, and the ancient customs properly carried out in the matter of good cheer, so that the old tales and songs, with perchance many happy additions, may lack nothing of their pristine vigor and be given with as much gusto as in the days of our bohemian vicissitudes.



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In the Next Generation.

AN ETCHING.

A FACE of isabel yellow, framed by straggling curls of filthy gray hair ; great eyes that had played meerschaum so long to the nicotine of rum that the glitter of manhood had entirely disappeared and left them a rusty, rheumy red. It was merely a question of days before the dikes burst and plunged Asahel Tisdale, curses and wreckage, down the drains of death to the mother of the obscure multitude—the morgue.

We were sitting in the inner room of McSoreley's pot-house, the old resort of the east-side, frequented chiefly by Englishmen who admire the old man's method of mixing his "'alf and 'alf" when he entered.

Hogeboom, who is one of the profession, said as he pointed him out, "There goes a man whose daughter will play the devil with her relatives in the next generation."

"You have seen her, she is Delia Tisdale, who plays 'Aurora Luce' in the farce at the Garden."

Delia Tisdale's reputatation hung in more shreds than the tattered battle-flags of the Old Guard.

"Save your story," I said, "she is as uninteresting to me as yonder Costigan."

" Well, for myself, I have known Delia a long time. We met on the Western circuit."

" A sweetheart, Jalin ? " I questioned.

" No, and there is no story, only a contrast ; " yonder you perceive her father with mottled lips, longing to be again wound up by the windlass of mixed drinks. The mere fragment of a tale exists about the mother of Delia. She came of a stern Puritan family, the men all lawyers or clergymen, and the women hard as the adamantine paths of Old Colony virtue. She married against the wishes of her family, and the threads of relationship were broken forever. The child of the blood came into the world, and Hilda the neglected daughter of the Berkleys died. Even then no hope came for the future of Delia from this rich and influential home. There were other daughters of the Berkleys but they were gifted only with the appreciation of economy, such as the purchasing of slightly soiled Morocco shoes ; they could not create, but were able to translate or copy Rablais.

Delia the daughter of circumstance, marked from her mother's womb with ferocity and cunning, studies in silence the religion of revenge. And the rumors that scale the mountains of the seasons, and pass the bridgeless ravines of social distinction, carry the burden of the thoughts of this excellent family to the child of Hilda, and they are not forgotten.

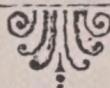
There is no story as yet, but the feud grows, and in the next generation, oh ! ye relatives, when the tocsin sounds and red scandal stains the awakened sky, when down the white streets the bells sing a mad chorus, not your readiness with bed-room texts will save you. Little words return at night and paint the secret sign upon your portal. Soon the watch-dog will creep into his kennel and begin the long slumber of death.

The drunkard's offspring lives ; even revenge is a study, and have not Delia's kins-people sown for the next gereration ?

Poor wilted wisdom of the law, thou art not always like the Rose of Sharon.



THE ELEPHANT.



HERE is a gloomy grace in his majestic face,
 A philosophic swing to his probosis, and
 A grim and measured fling of mighty gnarled limbs.
 Slow, and with old world stateliness he passeth on ;
 Chilling the sunlight with his cold secretive eyes
 That gravely gleam from out the massive, swaying head;
 Oh ! ponderous idol of great patience, marching down,
 Crushing each narrow confine to a tragic path ;
 How like thou art to some stupendous thought that bears
 Cold words of wisdom through a century of lust.





THE EVOLUTION
—OF—
A POETASTER.



A PYGMEAN imp had attached himself to a projecting crag in one of the western hills and was weeping piteously.

A ragged rock, with a bat-like, cat-like creature embracing its weather-worn face is not a gracious sight, yet as flowers flourish on dung-hills and the ancient law of "small beginnings" still has force, and is broad enough to cover devilkins, no exception need be taken.

It was a spring day. The mimic billows of the Colorado played at the base of the fluted crags, and swept in and out of the caverns in a sort of senseless game of hide and seek. The sun shone royally, not disdaining to shimmer down a few beams upon the imp whose heart already seemed about to melt from the intensity of his misery. Old friend Phoebus we blame you for many a rainy day, when we ought to censure the prejudiced clouds which are forever sulkily rolling across somebody's sky and afterwards trying to smooth matters out by tickling the fancy with fantastic rain-bows; stealing our friend's laughter and working it over into something as hopeful but not so lasting.

As to the son of Sheol, he continued to sob and whine until about the going down of the sun, when Eblis, the Prince of Darkness, stalked out of an adjacent retreat and accosted him.

"My son," he said, "one would think you were trying to master the art of worldly compassion; this is no way to cultivate

the spirit of your sire ; you split my ears with your Belfast blubbering, rob me of my *siesta* and trouble my conscience. What we do not know to-day we are apt to know to-morrow ; I plainly perceive you are discontented ! ”

“ ‘Tis so,” squeaked the devilkin, clambering over the angle of the cliff. “ I admit it. I am possessed by a terrible desire. Papa, have you ever longed for anything ? ”

“ Nothing,” said Eblis with a grin, “ except for power when the last trumpet blows to transform myself into something acceptable, and so fly into heaven ! ”

“ That is it ! ” shrieked the imp, “ you have a desire, you entertain a hope, a very faint hope perhaps, but it should cause you to open your umbrella-like sympathy in my case ! ”

“ And what may your hope or wish be ? ” asked the Devil dryly.

“ Father, I desire to be a poet,” sighed the tearful child, sucking his trembling little hoof.

“ A poet ! ” Satan groaned.

The sun gave one sickly smile and dropped behind the hills.

The breeze became breathless ; even the wilfull waves left off kissing in the caverns and listened.

We have heard of poets seeking the shades of Sheol for inspiration. We remember a certain singer who wandered as far in search of his wife ; we may have been there ourselves, we do not say, but have we ever known of a born devil aspiring to poetry ?

It was a denouement which Satan did not expect.

He may have imagined that his offspring desired to burn a city, or wished for longer horns or some similar infernal adornment ; but when he heard him declare that he wished to be a poet, the Arch-Fiend turned pale, staggered, and undoubtedly would have fallen had he not grasped a portion of the rock with his boa-constrictor-like tail.

“ Father,” whined the infant, “ grant my wish. You always said there were some worldlings you could shame. If I fail, as the saying goes, I shall soon seek the home fire-side ! ”

Satan mused.

“Papa,” the small one asked, “have there never been poets who were of our kind?”

“Child, in the history of the world we may learn of men who considered themselves verse-makers, and tyros who imagined they were as skillful as myself. Alas! they were lunatics.

“Many taught foolish things; many made people ill.”

“But did not these mortals steal your style and pilfer pages from your essay on apes entitled, “When you know as much as I do, you may fiddle your lips on your teeth?”

“Even so, some took a little, while others pillaged right and left. Human nature is like the bottom of a muddy river, and the good things which drop from God’s galleys sink so far into the mire that even I have much trouble to get at them.”

“But what fate befell these same thieves?”

“Nothing at the time, child. Some like a bite. Others the entire apple. I was satisfied. Again, these *three score and ten year fellows* were wise after their own fashion. They cracked my safe for a few ideas, escorted with their versatile fingers the work of established authors into their own manuscripts, and having sucked from the crater of literary crime a kind of concentrated ‘contrition, confession and satisfaction,’ by degrees they began to believe in themselves, and at last raised on the flattery of the foolish, toppled over the wall into certainty.”

“Oh, Papa! what an orator you are!”

“I have made tempting speeches in my time,” quoth the grand adversary of man, at the same instant shooting at his son a sublimely cunning glance.

The small one switched up his tail for a handkerchief, the excitement of the discussion having made his nose bleed.

“Papa, please permit me to be a poet. I won’t write anything personal. Please do!” and the sunny eyes of little sin gazed beseechingly upon the father fiend.

Satan scratched his right horn thoughtfully.

He wished to please his offspring; that was natural.

He wished to please himself; that was devilish.

If this ambitious imp should stigmatize him as *good* in a book it would assuredly injure his reputation ; thus he argued : The world would not care for him if he lost his old time smile. His wickedness was his rouge-pot, and his originality, the essence of his popularity. He who saith the Devil is not interesting hath one eye, and that near the turn of his coat.

Eblis, taken from the wings of the theatre Hades, where according to theological tradition, he spends much of his time plotting and maturing those surprising song and dance entertainments, which are the delight and wonder of the nations, and slammed down in the middle of the proverbial ten acre lot, along with certain mortals we perhaps have in mind, would be no very terrifying sight ; the diabolical variety of his deviceful grin would speedily vanish, and the Devil constitute but one more kitten-eyed wonder, gathered into the rag-bag of forgetfulness.

The Prince of Darkness was aware of this.

At last he turned to the anxious devilkin. "Son of the Combustible Realm," he began, "never must it be said that Eblis followed the puny precedents of men, and refused to allow one of his race to become a slave of the pen ; no one shall dare to be original in these days but myself. Your father has spoken !" He emphasized his last words with a graceful and expressive gesture.

"Now pretty one," he continued, "rise and turn your face toward the great city—thus. Attention ! When you hear me beat the rock with my cloven hoofs, and when you hear me roar like the Titans of Tartaros, then look to it that you breathe hard and scream 'Willi nilli ! I'm a poet ! I'm a verse-maker ! I'm mad !'"

"Father, you have a long head," said the imp.

"Indeed son, many believe so."

"One moment, father ; kiss me goodbye."

Presently the chief of the apostate angels gathered himself together, hammered the rock with his cloven hoofs and bellowed like ten billion infuriated bulls ; and the inimitable imp, sta-

tioned near the edge of the crag, screamed out the appropriate words.

Immediately the clouds fell and enveloped them ; blue jets of fire sprang like serpents from the fissures of the cliff, and the tempest of Satan's roaring resembled the awful clash of two worlds. As suddenly the tumult ceased. The flames died out, the nebulae rose, and upon the crag there stood alone a human being—a stripling—clad in a cutaway coat, blasé trousers and a slouch hat. In one hand he held a copy of the Iliad. He gazed through the twilight with glowing eyes and clasped his hands in ecstacy behind him. In doing so he discovered that he was tailless. For an instant his face was strongly marked with regret. Then the philosophy of poetry came to the rescue.

“One cannot be entirely blessed from horn to hoof,” he murmured. “Now for my career. I wonder when I’ll see father again.”



A Lydian Legend.

I.

ONCE as a Lydian legend doth relate
 Two beauteous Peri sisters, Love and Hate,
 Having escaped the Elfin sentry band,
 That clusters at the gates of Fairy-land—
 Strayed into a fair garden of our earth
 And roused the drowsy echoes by their mirth.

II.

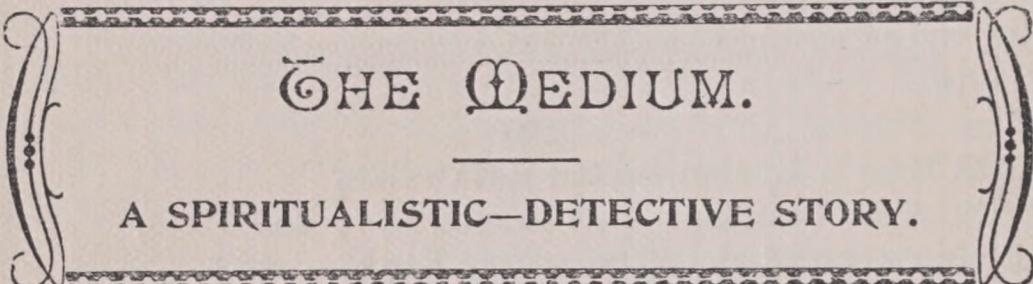
Now while like bees they solved this flower, that leaf,
 There came two earthly strollers, Joy and Grief ;
 And Grief gazed long on modest Love, while Joy
 Paid ardent court to tempting Hate—less coy:
 Anon they wedded at the neighboring fane,
 Discord with smiles and tenderness with pain.

III.

But when sweet Eos swept the morning's bars,
 Flamed, laughed and sang to sleep the pallid stars,
 The Peri queen decreed their bliss be brief,
 Joy weary grew of Hate; Love sadder waned by Grief,
 Alas! that Hate should fret the feast of Joy ;
 Alack! that grief should prove Love's dark alloy.

IV.

Malice and mirth, and perfect love and pain
 Forever mingle in each day's refrain ;
 Yet would that other myths like unto love
 Desert the airy palaces above—
 Descend and light all wanderers with grief
 As Eos burnishes the shrunken leaf.



THE MEDIUM.

A SPIRITUALISTIC—DETECTIVE STORY.

PART I.

THE public circle was over and my proselytes had departed.

I seated myself in an arm chair before the grate fire, intending to derive some enjoyment from the remainder of the evening, and as I had my pipe, a novel and a bottle of Muscatel wine on the stand at my elbow, I saw no reason to believe otherwise.

Now, I have a habit of singing or rather of humming in *falsetto* softly to myself when I am planning phenomena to amuse the one-eyed Spiritualists, or whenever I am interested in anything.

Turning over the leaves of the book I had chosen to keep me company, I chanced upon this sentence used as a quotation, "Be sure your *sin* will find you out."

I chanted it over several times after the manner of a certain celebrated savant in order to arrive at the correct interpretation.

Suddenly the significance of the text dawned upon me.

"Be sure your *sin* will find you out," that was it.

My first thought had been that the text claimed that all sins are brought to light eventually, an unpleasant reflection for one who makes a living out of deviltry; but I knew that thousands

of crimes had never been unearthed, and are [never likely to be, and the thought gave me comfort.

After all, it was merely a matter of conscience, and as my sins never troubled me when they brought money in their little hands, I did not fear being haunted by them in any such indefinite hour when it might choose to awake. Good conscience, sleep on! A Spirit medium hath no business with thee.

Again I chanted in *falsetto* the quotation as a polite good-bye to the thought, and just as I finished with an improvised cadenza, my electric bell began to trill.

It did not ring seven times; it gave but one peal.

Seven sharp touches of the button at the street door entrance was a signal which informed me that one of my intimate friends had called.

Was it possible that old Mrs. Clark had returned for another kiss from her pet spirit Aimee?

My apartment of three rooms was on the first floor of No. 499 — street, Brooklyn, and I had settled upon it as my abiding place because of a very handy office door that led directly from the entrance into my flat. I believe that it had been so arranged to suit the convenience of a medical man who had occupied it for a few months.

The curtains of the front windows were drawn and the blinds closed. I did not intend to spoil my evening by furnishing amusement for some old sycophant who had not received a sufficient dose of Spritualism at the public circle, so I remained in my arm chair.

Suddenly the bell chimed seven times in quick succession.

A psychic always pays attention to signals, so I rose, tucked my pipe into my pocket, placed the bottle of wine behind the blower, and then opened the door.

The gas was burning in the vestibule, and I at once recognized my visitor.

It was no less a person than Louis Newcome of Newcome's Detective Agency.

He shook the snow from the rim of his hat and entered.

"Ah, Monsieur Enarc, you have a snug fire, but no carpet on your floor," he remarked.

"If I were richer I should invest in some Turkish rugs," I replied, closing the door. "'Tis a stormy night."

"Monsieur Enarc," he pursued, drawing a chair up to the fire, "on my way down to my office in the "World" building this morning I passed a store where they have for sale some very fine carpets. I think you can make a good choice there."

"You have something on the tapis," I suggested.

"Yes, I dropped in to tell you that to-morrow night a smart young lady intends calling upon you."

"Indeed. I should like to hear the details. Will you have a cigar?"

"No, but I will try a little of that wine in the bottle behind the blower. You should always make allowance for a shadow; even the ghost of a black bottle tells where the substance lies."

I poured out a glass of the Muscatel and handed it to him.

"Now for the details," he said.

"In a certain seminary in this State the faculty have had many complaints lodged with them by the young women students.

"One girl has lost a diamond ring, three others have had their watches stolen, and to crown all, Miss Childs, daughter of one of the richest men in New York, has been robbed of a five thousand dollar diamond necklace which was a present from her father on her twentieth birthday.

"Now people do not drop diamond necklaces as they drop their relatives, and so I was called upon to locate the thief and recover the pilfered property.

"After a conference with the principal of the institution, I requested permission to investigate the room of each girl student.

"He objected to this, but as I insisted he at last yielded, and when the girls were all occupied in the class rooms we made a grand circuit. I did not expect to discover anything, but as they sing in 'La Cigale,' 'Why not begin at the beginning?'

"In a certain room in the upper corridor I found my first

clue. One of the panes of glass in the window of the room had been scratched by a diamond. I also observed a scratch made after the fashion of the first part of the letter A, as if the person making the curve had started to write a name, and then thought better of it.

"The usual routine search followed, and having finished, I inquired of the principal as to who occupied the room. He informed me that Miss Alice Greville, of New York, was the occupant, it having been assigned to her early in the year.

"I then requested him to obtain from each student a list of jewelry, and thus knowing their possessions, my first clue began to lend me definite assistance. From the inventory I learned that Miss Greville possessed no diamonds, but many times had expressed great admiration for them."

"Most persons of sound sense are fond of diamonds," I said.

"Quite correct, Monsieur Enarc. To continue: "I gave the principal no hint of my suspicions, but put in a week's quiet work and discovered several important facts.

"My plans are now arranged. I have brought it about that Miss Greville is spending the Easter holidays with the young lady who lost the necklace, and who is working under my directions.

"Now to business. You perceive the crime. I have discovered that young as she is, Miss Greville is a thorough Spiritualist, and thus have decided that she shall visit you.

"Your advertisement in Sunday's *Eagle* has been brought to her notice by Miss Childs, the young woman who lost the necklace. Miss Childs is to feign great interest in the matter and tell Miss Greville that she intends to visit you. Of course Alice Greville will accompany her.

"When they appear here for a sitting, the young woman who has lost the necklace will declare that she is too timid after all to enter your seance chamber. Then we trust that our thief will laugh and say that she is not afraid to have a sitting; of course in that case you will give her a seance."

“ But what shall I tell her ? ”

“ Monsieur Enarc, you astonish me. A medium, and not know what to say ? Well, in the first seance you give, say that her mother, who died long ago, is with her. That she gives the name of ‘ Louise,’ and seems grieved about something. Then talk of a great shadow closing upon her life.”

“ You wish me to work upon her so that she will make a confession ? ”

“ Exactly.”

“ And this information about her mother is correct ? ”

“ Yes.”

“ What time shall I expect her to-morrow night ? ”

“ At eight o’clock.”

“ I shall count upon affairs taking the turn you have prophesied.”

“ You may count upon it ; and now I must leave you. Do your best to-morrow night, and by the way I shall arrive at 7 p. m., and you can conceal me in your private room, that is, the next one to the cabinet. I wish to hear all that is said. Now I will bid you good-night, and do not forget the Turkish rugs.”

PART II.

AT seven o’clock the following night the secret service gentleman pressed the electric button, and I admitted him and concealed him in the private apartment adjoining the seance cabinet.

At 8 p. m. my bell rang once again, and I hastily opened the door. Two young women stood in the entrance.

“ Is this Monsieur Enarc,” said the one nearest to the door.

“ Yes, I am the medium,” I said, stepping aside that they might enter.

They were nearly of the same age, that is, not over twenty. The one who had first addressed me, and who was a very beauti-

ful bloned, said, "Monsieur Enarc, we have called for a 'sitting,' at least my friend has, and if you could give her the time now, she would be greatly obliged to you."

The young lady who had lost the diamond necklace then spoke in a hesitating manner: "I would like a 'sitting' very much—that is, I would like to make an appointment for a seance—not to-night, but to-morrow if you can accommodate me."

"Why, Margaret, you came purposely for a 'sitting' to-night; I fear she is timid, Monsieur Enarc."

"There is nothing to fear from the Spirit World," I said, quietly.

"I think I will wait," responded the young lady I knew to be Miss Childs, as she glanced apprehensively about the apartment.

"Well, as my friend is somewhat nervous and does not care for a seance to-night, perhaps it is better so. Could you give me a 'sitting?'" inquired Miss Greville.

Drawing out my watch, I glanced at it, and then said, "Yes, I have just sufficient time as I have an appointment at 9 p. m."

The young ladies held a whispered consultation, and Miss Greville said, "I am ready."

I led the way to the cabinet.

Now I have always made it a point of having my seance room furnished as impressively as possible. It was a small apartment in the rear of the reception room and the walls were hung with heavy tapestry, relieved only by a painting of my famous spirit-guide, Dr. Oesmond.

A brasier placed on an onyx stand gave forth incense, and added to the remarkable flavor of mystery.

There were two chairs in the cabinet. I invited Miss Greville to be seated, and then taking the seat opposite, I placed it near her and took her hand in mine.

"I shall now pass into the trance state, and my guide, Dr. Oesmond, will take possession of me and speak with you. You must not withdraw your hand from mine or the established magnetic circle will be broken."

She murmured her acquiescence.

I closed my eyes and remained perfectly quiet.

There was very little light in the cabinet, and the air was burdened with the incense.

After a proper pause I shuddered and said in an icy whisper, "Daughter, the spirit of Dr. Oesmond is with you, the guide of this young medium. He comes from the other world and enters your sphere of life; he perceives your soul surroundings and your material existence.

"Lo! from the shades comes one to you. She calls your name; she says 'Alice, I am your mother.' Do you understand?"

The supposed diamond thief faintly said "Yes."

Suddenly I clutched her hand with great force and said roughly, "Who is Louise?"

She gave a short gasp of astonishment, and exclaimed, "Oh! it must be my mother."

I also came near uttering an ejaculation for just at that instant we heard three distinct raps, but emanating from what spot I could not tell. Even the blind cannot locate a sound if they are not aware of the position of the person or instrument producing it.

The fact was that I had become so occupied with my part that I had forgotten our Mr. Newcome.

The raps, however, had a decided effect on the thief, for she said: "Mother dear, are you near me?"

"Daughter, your mother cannot manifest to-night; the influence is not strong enough; and again, she is troubled. She bids me tell you through this medium that there is a shadow near you, she seeks to warn you of coming evil, and I hear these words repeated: 'Alice, pray to be forgiven.' There is so much darkness around you; strange voices, strange faces, and yet your mother Louise is near you. Now she is leaving you, yet she still calls you by name, 'Alice—Alice—Alice.'"

The influence began to depart. I gave a great sigh. Slowly I opened my eyes and after a short silence, said: "I am very

dizzy, always so after giving a trying seance. Did you receive a satisfactory test?"

Her voice shook as she replied to my question.

We then rose and passed into the reception room where Miss Childs awaited us. "What makes you look so pale, Alice," she exclaimed, as we entered.

"My mother came to me," replied Miss Greville, and her voice still trembled a little.

Then she turned to me: "Your fee is——"

"Two dollars, mademoiselle."

She opened her purse and handed me the money.

"Could you direct us to Fulton street," she asked as she arranged her wrap.

"You have only one block to go; Fulton street crosses G—— street; but you must beware of the trolley cars," I said, laughing.

As they were then ready, I opened the door for them.

Two minutes after their departure Mr. Louis Newcome joined me.

"Was it all right," I inquired.

"Could not have been better," he returned; "you were not too insistent. Now Miss Greville will think over what you have told her and may be back to-morrow or the next day for another seance. That is what we want. Of course she will tell Miss Childs that she did not hear anything very astonishing, and will probably make light of the sitting to her friend; still I feel sure that we have made an impression."

"If she should come to-morrow tell her that you cannot give her a seance on account of lack of time, but let her understand that she can make an appointment with you for the day following. We must not appear too anxious."

"But where do you suppose the diamond necklace is all this time, Mr. Newcome?"

"Ah, that is what we do not tell the medium," replied the detective.

He put on his coat and went out.

PART III.

TO my surprise, the next morning I received a telegram from Louis Newcome, warning me to expect a visit at 2 p. m., from Alice Greville. The detective arrived at one o'clock. "The seance was very effective," he said as he entered. "Her classmate has told me that she lay awake nearly all night, talking about her dead mother and sobbing at intervals. Here are the rest of the facts which you can weave into your seance this afternoon: Her father was the dishonest broker of the firm of Greville & Knowles, and Alice is a kleptomaniac. Greville died three years ago, and Alice inherits his money; her uncle has been appointed her guardian. Be a trifle bold in your work this afternoon, for this is one of the few times when a clairvoyant can speak with a degree of certainty."

After a few minutes Newcome retired to the third room and I sat down before the fire. It was snowing and blowing a gale, still we knew she would come.

As I waited I fell to wondering what would be the fate of this beautiful girl who was afflicted by so terrible a malady. That she was cunning we could not doubt. Well, it was not my business to pity her youth and sex.

Shortly after two o'clock the bell sounded.

It was Alice.

"I desire another seance, Monsieur Enarc," she said as she loosened her cloak; "I leave Brooklyn this afternoon, and this is my last opportunity."

"The storm has interfered with my engagements to-day, so I can hold a seance for you presently," I replied. She lifted her veil, and I noted the anxious expression of her brilliant eyes. Never have I seen a more beautiful face than Alice Greville's. It was delicately lined with expression, and crowned by masses of brown hair through which ran exquisite shades of gold.

We entered the darkened cabinet and I immediately passed into the trance state.

The spirit-guide, Dr. Oesmond, began to speak: "Out of the shades and the sepulchres of the past come those you have

covered with miniature lakes of muddy water, and at last arrived at a hillock beside the highway.

Upon this mound was an old tortoise, who had crawled from beneath a heap of dead leaves, and with neck outstretched, was gazing about with red eyes that seemed to express his dissatisfaction at the state of the weather.

He was indeed a very ancient tortoise, just one hundred years old, and having slept all winter in the heap of last year's leaves he had awakened, and came forth trusting to find a full-blown April day, but the miserable sky, the monotonous rain and the clammy ground, made him uncomfortable.

When, however, he perceived the dainty daughter of the Sun, he appeared more satisfied.

She paused to tell him that spring had certainly come, and that only a short time before she had discovered the first violet, a promising flower, growing in a meadow, merely a minute's journey down the road.

"This being the case," observed the old tortoise, "spring has truly come, and I thank you for bringing me this piece of good news."

Just as he finished speaking, they heard a flutter of wings, and their comrade, robin-redbreast, alighted on the knoll.

"Why, where have you been all this winter?" cried the Sun-damsel.

"Ah! Is it you sunny one?" the robin exclaimed, "I always fare south when cold weather comes on, but make a point of returning by April. This year I fear I have been too hasty in concluding my journey north. For the past two hours I have been looking for spring signals, and the only encouraging sign my eyes have yet rested on is our friend the tortoise, the philosopher of the fields, who never leaves his snug quarters until warm weather."

"I should be willing to concur with you that it is yet too chilly for spring," interrupted the tortoise, "if it were not that this sun-dancer has just informed me of her discovery of the first dear little violet in a marsh down the road. I believe I will

saunter over and have some conversation with the brave pretty flower." So saying, the old sage plodded down the bank and left the Sun-girl and robin-redbreast.

"I have already selected a magnificent site for my nest," chattered the robin, "when the ancient tortoise had disappeared."

"It is a large apple-tree, and when the branches break into blossom it will make the prettiest home I have ever had."

"Near the orchard where I have made my choice, dwells a singularly good girl. She gave me some delicious cake-crumbs this morning for my breakfast. Still I fear she is ill, for she is compelled to rest by her window, and appears extremely pale and thin."

The robin's description of his little friend interested the Sun-girl. "Do show me where she lives," she begged.

"With all my heart," consented redbreast. He led the way over the fields until they came to his orchard, and just on the other side of it was the home of the bird's friend.

"What is her name," inquired the Sun-damsel as they flew along.

"I do not know her last name," replied the robin, "but her first name is Lulu, a very pretty name, do you not think so?"

Just at that instant they both alighted on the window-sill. It was a beautiful sight for dear little Lulu when she raised her eyes and beheld a sunbeam and a robin-redbreast gazing through the glass. She called her mamma, who came and opened the window and seemed so grateful that something had made her pale daughter happy. How pleased they all were, when redbreast plucked up spirit and encouraged by the Sun-child, who laughed with joy at the sight, picked crumbs from the sweet invalid's hand.

After some time, the sunbeam and redbreast returned to the orchard to view the site of the latter's nest, and thus, while they were deeply engaged, suddenly the sulky clouds parted, great Phoebus shone, and all the Sun-child's brothers and sisters came tumbling and whirling and laughing through the mists, and made the landscape a thousand times more bright and enchant-

ing than before; and when they learned that their sister had discovered the first violet their joy was boundless, and straight-way they ran to welcome it, taking her along as a guide.

We learn a little by hammering at old proverbs. Goodness is sure of an audience. Loving words are always to be found in life's springtime, and so, taking advantage of the rifts in the mists, we may become bearers of as sweet tidings as the daughter of the Sun bore to the ancient tortoise and robin-red breast.



Lady May.

I.

No sombre song or Andalusian lay,
 Could act as setting for the Lady May ;
 Nor is the rounded rhyme or poet's seine
 Quite capable to seize the vestal vein
 Of brief description, and in phrase relate
 The glory of the singer's fair estate.

II.

By merry paths, through mystic meadows deep
 With tangled flowers of hope and triumph sweet,
 Still may you trip fair music's vistas down,
 And cull the joy of each succeeding crown ;
 Nor fear that tragic fate may intervene
 To tear to tatters azure skies serene.

III.

Crowned Queen of melody and loveliness,
 Free all your hours be from bitterness ;
 May wreaths immortal challenge every care,
 And rich enchantment govern every prayer.
 The Gods of gray Olympus still have power,
 And give to Lady May their richest dower.

known and loved; there is a noise as of the breaking of the billows on the sea shore, the tangled skein of your life drifts before me, and the spirit of your mother stretches out her arms to save you. There is a shadow that will not leave you, and through the wavering mists I perceive long fingers reaching forth to grasp a glittering object."

By this time Alice Greville was overcome by superstitious terror and dread of this strange occult power that laid bare the secret of her heart. She began to sob hysterically.

"Whom shall I trust," she exclaimed several times.

"Let your faith rest with the Spirit World."

She clasped her hands in a passion of fear and cried: "Mother, I will give them back to-night."

The thought flashed with the words, she has the diamond necklace with her.

At that instant all my criminal instincts were on the *qui vive*. Ah! if Newcome was not concealed in the third room, those magnificent gems would be mine."

"Alice, you have the diamonds," I said slowly.

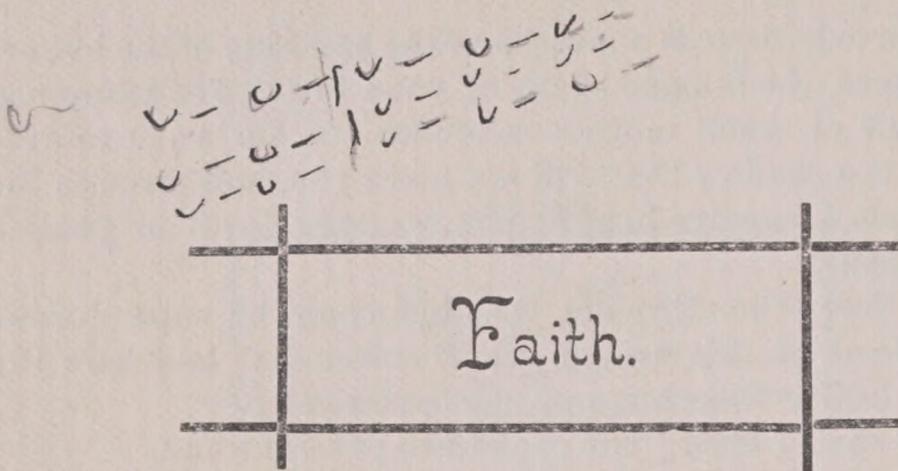
There was light enough for me to observe the bewildered expression of her tear-stained face as she unloosed the bosom of her gown and drew forth the circle of shining stones.

"You have done wisely," I murmured, as I leaned forward to receive the necklace, but before my fingers could touch Margaret Child's property, an arm was thrust through the drapery and the jewels were plucked from my sight by the detective. I sprang forward just as Alice Greville fell to the floor in a dead faint. It was some minutes before she revived, and then I retired glad that my disgraceful work was ended. Soon after, the girl accompanied by Louis Newcome, left my apartment.

In the evening Newcome returned.

"You hypnotized her," I said.

"Kindness is the best hypnotism," he replied. "No one must ever know of Alice Greville's escapade," he added as he handed me a check, which to my mind was a higher form of hypnotism than kindness.



OUT of the sea//of sacrifice shall drift
 The ambergris//of choice, God's dearest gift.

Out of some sack//clothed hour of hopeless tears,
 Faith will come sailing home and silence fears.

A voice shall cry//to thee, "The night is done,
 The unforgetting Father faileth none."

Then will thy eyes perceive the flower of prayer ;
 God's love the stair//way, and thy faith each stair.





THE SUN-CHILD.



AT dawn of the April day, the humdrum clouds had closed like great doors over the world, banishing the light of the bountiful Sun, and driving the charming Sun-children away.

The Sun-babies did not grow fretful because they could no longer dance over the hedgerows and highways.

Being sugar-plums of contentment they immediately began to devise other amusements.

During the tedious winter they had reckoned the days and made many as short as possible, in order to hasten the advent of spring. They desired to again hold their dances in fertile fields, converse with flowers, and make all things so bewilderingly beautiful that the song-birds would return, build their nests, sing, and be as joyous as they had been in any previous summer.

Now as they were exercising above the clouds, one curious daughter of the Sun discovered a rift in the mist, and peering through, beheld the gray old earth.

The prospect was not enchanting, for the rain continued to fall, and the villages and fields appeared desolate.

The Sun-child hesitated a minute, then boldly slipping through the opening, descended rapidly, and at last reached a meadow. Here it was decidedly cold and lugubrious, and the sky frowned in such a threatening fashion that she had half a mind to return to her charming brothers and sisters.

As she paused in the moist meadow, wondering what she ought to do, she chanced to glance at the ground, and at her

feet beheld a sad-hearted blue flower in the act of raising its pretty head to gaze at the dreary sky.

In an instant she was beside the innocent, glowing with joy since she had found the first violet of the season.

When the forlorn flower beheld the daughter of the Sun her sadness changed to glad surprise, and when the laughing Sun-girl kneeled and kissed away the rain tears from her fair face, she hastily concluded that, after all, the world was not so dismal and loveless, and was thankful that she had found her way out of the mold.

The Sun-damsel, versed in flower language, welcomed the new-comer. "I am truly glad I have found you," she said; "every spring we, that is, I and my brothers and sisters, try and see which one of us will find the first violet. For a long time yesterday we searched across the meadows for you, until at last our father summoned us to play the game of sunset, and after that we drew pictures in the west until bed-time."

"For a long time I remained under the ground," replied the violet, "because I did not know where I was, or what to do; but an hour ago I heard a noise as of something gently striking the ground above me, and soon the soil became cold and very wet. I tried to move, and after a few attempts the earth loosened and I was able to raise my head. When I felt the force of the rain I was sorry I had not staid below. I fear I was crying when you came to me."

"If I had not found you," said the Sun-child, "you would have continued lonesome and sad. It is always thus with the first violet; but before many days the meadows will be full of fair flowers, and all the children of the Sun will come and help you make the spring days glorious.

After saying these tender, hopeful words, the Sun-girl bade the comforted one an affectionate farewell and left the meadow rejoicing because she had found and cheered the first fragile flower of the year. When she reached the highway that ran by the margin of the pasture the rain suddenly ceased, but the sky was still overcast by dark clouds. She whirled along the road



Reinstatement.

WITH you who love me best,
 I meekly stand confessed ;
 Silent, unless

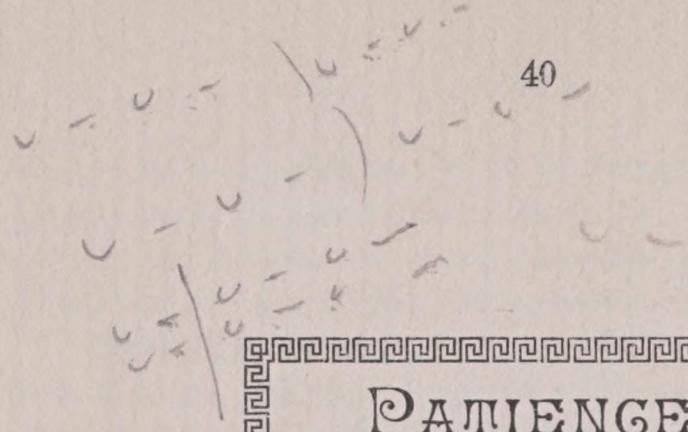
I beg you to forget
 This hour with sorrow set ;
 And only bless

The memory of days—
 Love's promise paved highways
 By which we've come.

Thus do I plead with you,
 Trusting you will renew
 Your faith in me.

Thus doubting, I await
 Your messenger of fate,
 In tears, until

Blue eyes through mists relent,
 Forgive and glow, content
 To love me still.



PATIENCE.

HERE is a time for harvesting
 Wreaths won, and cherished years ;
 A season for rejoicing,
 After the days of tears.

Broad are the gifted meadow-lands
 Please God ! and do not tire,
 For ever hastening hands shall ope
 The gates of your desire.

Let mother Patience bind your brow,
 Her benediction be,
 Gethsemane and Calvary
 To teach their strength to thee.



Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing Agent: Magnesium Oxide
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